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This table summarizes the interim metrics adopted by the Coalition for Public Relations Research Standards and approved by the CPRRS customer panel. For additional details on each metric, please refer to the documents available at:

<http://www.instituteforpr.org/researchstandards/>

Traditional media measurement and analysis (print newspapers and magazines, broadcast and cable television and radio)

Metric name

Metric description

Item [for media analysis]

An **item** for media analysis is “a manifest unit of analysis used in content analysis consisting an entire message itself (e.g., an advertisement, story, press release)” (Stacks, 2006). This would also apply to print news stories, news wire stories, broadcast segments, online news items, blog posts, comments on blog posts, discussion board posts, forum posts, tweets, videos, and any other piece of communications content. This definition replaces commonly used terms such as “story,” “clip,” or “article” that are ill-defined and unsuitable for the breadth of communications channels today.

Mention

A **mention** is reference to a company, brand, product, executive, spokesperson, third-part influential, topic, issue, or similar entity that is the focus (or one of the focal points) of the media analysis. A single item may contain multiple **mentions**. The following all count as mentions: entity names: company nicknames or slang (especially important in social media), brand names, product names, and stock ticker symbols.

Circulation, impressions, and reach

Circulation, impressions, and reach are three fundamental metrics for traditional media outputs. They answer the question of how many people may have been exposed to an item. They do not answer the question of how many people actually read or heard an item, nor do they measure impact on awareness, understanding, attitudes, or actions.

There are important differences among circulation, impressions, and reach.

Circulation

Circulation is the “number of copies of a publication has distributed (as opposed to read)” (Michaelson and Stacks, 1st ed., 2010, p.88). In other words, **circulation** is the total number of copies distributed or the total number of ‘hard copies’ sold of a given edition of a publication over a specific period of time (as opposed to read). The total number of actual readers is not the circulation number due to nonreaders and/or pass-along readership.

Impressions

Impressions are “the number of people who might have had the opportunity to be exposed to a story that has appeared in the media; [impressions are] also known as ‘opportunity to see’ (OTS)” (Michaelson and Stacks, 1st ed., 2010, p. 190).

Impressions do not equal awareness. Awareness needs to be measured using other research tools. Impressions are indicative of the opportunity to see (OTS). Consider OTS as an alternative nomenclature to better clarify what impressions really means – [the] potential to see/read.

Reach

Reach “refers to the scope or range of distribution and thus coverage that a given communication product has in a targeted audience group; broadcasting, the net unduplicated (also called “duplicated”) radio or TV audience for programs or commercials as measured for a specific time period” (Michaelson and Stacks, 1st ed., 2010, p. 88-89).

Social media analysis (print newspapers and magazines, broadcast and cable television and radio)

Item	An item of content is a post, micro-post, article, or other instance appearing for the first time in a digital medium. An item is the basic unit of analysis used in content analysis. This definition of “ item ” replaces “clip” “post” and other unclear terminology. Items of content refer to the content vehicle in its entirety, which means that a single item can contain multiple mentions and derivatives. Derivatives of items such as comments, likes, etc., should not be counted as additional items .
Mention	A mention refers to a [single, discrete, specific] appearance of a brand, organization, campaign, or entity that is being measured. An item may include multiple mentions.
Reach	Reach represents the total number of unique people who had an opportunity to see an item or a valid reproduction of that item across any digital media. Reach is typically quantified using social media monitoring tools, social platforms and/or panel based measurement solutions. Each tool, platform, and solution may have a unique method of calculating reach . For this reason it is critical to use the Transparency and Methods table to identify data collection sources.
Impressions	Impressions represent the gross number of items that could have been seen by all people, including repeats. The term “displayed” applies across channels, browsers, devices, and other methods by which an individual might see an item . Use of the term opportunities to see as a synonym for impressions is not recommended.

Engagement **Engagement** addresses the question of how many individuals were exposed to an item and then took some additional action. **Engagement** is defined as some action beyond exposure and implies an interaction between two or more parties. Social media **engagement** is an action that typically occurs in response to content in an owned channel – i.e., when someone engages **with you**.

Communications lifecycle

Awareness **Awareness** measures can take several different forms. These measures include **unaided awareness** and **aided awareness**. The most fundamental measure for public relations is a variation of an awareness measure known as **recall**. This measure has its foundation in “day after recall” testing that measured if the viewer or reader had any “related” or correct recall of the message elements included in the communication. The most basic level of **related recall** is recall or recollection of the name of the product, service or concept included in the communication being tested.” (Michaelson and Stacks, 2011)

Knowledge The most basic and fundamental challenge in assuring the effectiveness of public relations is **exposure of key messages** about the brand, product, issue, or topic to the target audience. Many of these key messages are basic facts about the brand, product, issue, or topic that serves as the essential level of knowledge that is critical for a target audience to understand. Levels of agreement with statements that present factual knowledge is a highly effective tool that determines if exposure to the messages occurred and if there is initial acceptance of the messages. **Knowledge** testing can be supplemented with a **credibility** measure that determines if the overall story about the brand, product, service, topic or issue is believable.” (Michaelson and Stacks, 2011)

Interest and relevance These measures constitute direct questions about **interest** in the brand, product, service, issue, or topic as well as broader measures that examine how they are perceived by the target audience. When the target audience is closely aligned with the brand, product, service, issue, or topic that is the subject of communication, there is an increased likelihood that they will take an **intended action** to purchase, support, or recommend. Without **interest** and **relevance** there is little by the target audience to take any form or action that is aligned with business or program objectives.

The basic question on **interest** is an overall or global question on **interest** in the brand, product, service, issue, or topic. This question is asked on a measurement *scale* to determine an overall intensity of **interest**. (Michaelson and Stacks, 2011)

Intent and preference **Intent** covers a broad range of measures. It is an attitudinal measure, not behavioral, and typically includes **preference** for a brand, product, service, issue, or topic, as well as **intent** to take a specific action. These actions can include purchase of a product service or brand, support for an idea or concept, willingness to try a product or service or to make an inquiry.

The questions used to measure **intent** start with **preference**. In most instances, a **preference** measure determines the choice of a single brand, product or service to the exclusion of others.

Intent and action **Intent** to take a specified action differs considerably from overall preference. Members of a target audience may **prefer** one brand, product or service over others. But, in many instances, this **preference** does not convert into a likely **action**. For example, a consumer may prefer one brand of snack chips over another. However, that same consumer may be unlikely to purchase that preferred brand because of price, availability or other product attributes. This question is asked on a scale to measure intensity of the **intent** to take an action. The question can be asked for multiple brands, products, services, issues or topics in order to gain an understanding of comparative intent.

Advocacy Public relations often differs from other forms of marketing communication because the end result of a communication program is not necessarily the sale of products or services. One of the key measures for the success of public relations programs is the ability of a program to **create advocates** among the target audience for a brand, product, service, issue or topic." (Michaelson and Stacks, 2011: 16)

Return on investment (ROI)

Return on investment (ROI) **ROI** is a financial measure that should only be used in cases where both money invested (the "I" of **ROI**) and money earned or saved (the "R" of **ROI**) can both be measured in financial terms. **ROI** should not be used when referring to results of non-financial measures. The formula for calculating ROI is:

$$\text{ROI} = \frac{\text{(Total \$ Earned, Saved or Avoided)} - \text{MINUS (Total \$ Invested)}}{\text{(Total \$ Invested)}} \times 100\%$$
